

PLAIN TALKS

April-May
1984

A peek into the past:
Audubon Pilgrimage

Up, up . . . and away:
Soaring medical costs

Beating the butterflies:
GSU Toastmasters



MAIL BOX

THE COVER

Lynne Lambert straightens the back of Elizabeth Daniel's costume. The two little girls danced with the Audubon Sweet Maids on the lawn of Hillcroft in St. Francisville in March.

Dressed in pantalets and knee-length dresses, the youngsters performed simple classical dance steps twice a day during the Audubon Pilgrimage.

Susan Gilley of Employee Communications captured the scene in the cover photograph.

For more details on how GSU employees help St. Francisville honor its past, see the related story and photographs on pages 10 and 11.

Gulf States Utilities
Zachary, La.

To whom it may concern:

I would like to take this time to say how much I appreciated your service. In November 1983, I had a little girl. For the months of December and January, I had to budget very closely. I called your office practically every single day for about two weeks, trying to find out how much we would owe for the month of December because the bill would be much more than our average bill. With the hard freeze, we had to run our heater on 80 degrees a lot of the time in order for the house to stay warm enough for our 4-week-old baby girl. Your clerks were so friendly and cooperative. One certain lady (I wish I could remember her name) was so sweet. She answered the phone most every time I called. To her, I would like to say "thank you." She knows who she is!

Also, once the bill came in, it was \$151 — twice our normal bill, which runs from \$70 to \$80.

There was no way we could pay the entire amount on time because we also had doctor bills to pay off. I called your office and a lady named Myra Ponthier spoke with me. She was very helpful and kind.

To both of these ladies, I say, "Thank you." Not being able to pay our bills on time is new to us. Our babies are well worth their weights in gold to us, but the new lifestyle of budgeting since our first arrived two years ago is made a lot easier by companies such as yourself.

God bless every one of you and thank you once again for hiring such competent and kind employees.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Jerri Jenkins

Natchez, Miss.

P.S. If we ever move back to the Baton Rouge area, I hope we do business with you again!

Gulf States Utilities
Lafayette, La.

Dear Sir:

Twice this week we had electrical problems here at our bank and we called to report this and ask for some help.

The purpose of this letter is to let you know how much we appreciated the prompt attention given us, and the polite and friendly manner in which your men helped us. I am sorry that I did not get the name of the man that was on your crew, but I ask that you thank him for me.

Yours truly,

Ray P. Bordelon

Manager

Washington State Bank
Arnaudville, La.

Editor's note: Two employees assisted the bank. They were Richard Higginbotham, district serviceman-1st class, and Jean Hollier, lineman-3rd class.

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Adelaide Greer

Rhonda Haskins

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Les Jones

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Laurie Tenner

Monica Thomas

David Thornhill

Jean Tinsley

Delores West

Nina Wiley

Angela Wilks

Dianna Winkelmann

Robby Zeringue

Employees who change residences or offices should fill out company mailing-address-change forms (GSU0012-00-81) and return them to the mailroom in the Edison Plaza. GSU publications, departmental mailings and other company information are not automatically forwarded; addresses must be corrected when employees move.

CONTENTS

PLAIN TALKS

Features:

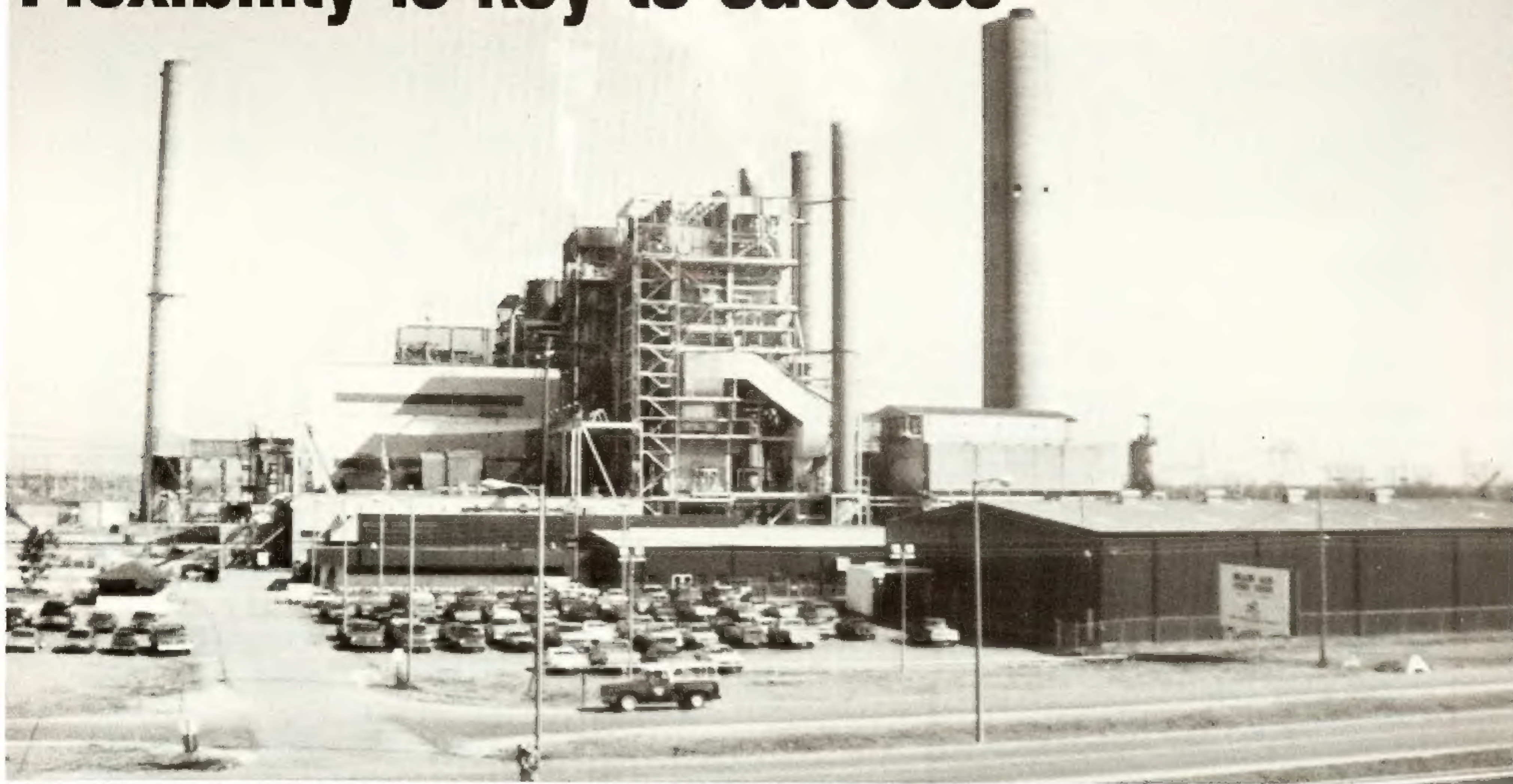
- | | |
|---|-----------|
| Flexibility key to success
Willow Glen achieves operating efficiency | 4 |
| Working together for GSU
Many jobs, personalities make up the team | 6 |
| Issue to feature GSU graduates
Proud relatives can send in photographs | 9 |
| Preserving the past in St. Francisville
River Bend employees participate in pilgrimage | 10 |
| Introducing your correspondents
These people can put you in the news | 12 |
| Up, up . . . and away
Something can be done about soaring medical costs | 14 |
| Louisiana World Exposition: GSU goes to the fair
Employees participate in New Orleans event | 18 |
| Beating the butterflies
Toastmasters develops fledgling speakers | 19 |

Departments

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 5 | On the move — Recent job changes |
| 8 | Service Awards — Recognition of employees |
| 16 | Inside GSU — Fake Willie, Real beauty |

At Willow Glen:

Flexibility is key to success



Willow Glen from the banks of the Mississippi.

Text and photos by Mike Rodgers

Last December's bitter cold sent temperatures dropping to record lows and placed a heavy demand on power plants across the Gulf States system. When the weather forced a cutoff of natural gas used to fuel the boilers at Willow Glen Station, the plant, located on the banks of the Mississippi River near Baton Rouge, switched to oil. "This flexibility is very important," notes Willow Glen Superintendent Doug Watkins. "It enabled us to go to 100 percent oil-burning capability without interrupting service to our customers."

The first unit at Willow Glen went on line in 1960. Four additional units were eventually added, bringing the plant's total capacity to 1,934 megawatts. "We have the largest oil-burning capability," says Watkins. Three of the units can burn heavy oil, while two others can be fueled by a light oil similar to diesel fuel. A huge tank farm adjacent

to Willow Glen holds 2,500,000 barrels of oil, delivered by ocean-going tankers which make their way up the Mississippi River.

In spite of the large oil supplies, Willow Glen isn't burning oil now, except in emergencies such as the frigid weather. "All of our boilers are running on natural gas," stresses Watkins, "since the supplies are adequate and the price is lower than oil." Three of the units at Willow Glen operate at very high "supercritical" pressure, more than at any other plant Gulf States owns. Supercritical units are very efficient and produce a kilowatthour at a lower cost.

Watkins is proud of his 226 employees and their dedication to keeping the plant in good working order. "They're the best in the world," he says. Looking ahead to 1985, Watkins sees the expiration of the Exxon contract as the next big challenge facing Willow Glen employees since more electricity will then be



Claude Dake, control room operations foreman, phones in fuel readings gathered periodically.

generated at Willow Glen. "We want to be able to produce the cheapest power of any plant in GSU. We want to be the best at what we do; and if we can do it better, we will," says Watkins.

ON THE MOVE

A

Albrecht, Robert P., Silsbee, to lineman-1st class, Electric T&D.

B

Ballard, Curnnie L., River Bend Station, to supervisor-quality engineering, River Bend Nuclear Group.

Bennefield, Charles D., formerly of Neches Station, to equipment operator, Plant Production, Nelson Coal.

Bonura, Norma G., Beaumont, to staff accountant I, Beaumont System Production.

Browning, John M., formerly of Port Arthur, to consumer information coordinator, Division Marketing and Consumer Services, Beaumont.

C

Clift, Mark B., Beaumont, to senior draftsman, Engineering Design.

Cole, Donald R., Port Arthur, to apprentice, Electric T&D.

Conner, John V., River Bend Station, to environmental supervisor, River Bend Nuclear Group.

Cook, Regina L., Port Arthur, to customer contact clerk, Division Accounting.

Cutaia, Diana G., Beaumont, to computer operator, Computer Applications.

D

Dahl, Opal L., Beaumont, to graphic technician, Office Services.

Dix, John H. Jr., Lewis Creek, to master repairman, Plant Production.

F

Fernandez, Alejandro R., formerly of Louisiana Station, to electrical maintenance supervisor, System Production, Willow Glen Station.

Foster, Aubry, Beaumont, to senior engineering assistant, Engineering Design.

Foy, Glen O., Nelson Station, to planning coordinator, Plant Production.

Franks, Byron P., Beaumont, to meterman-2nd class, Electric T&D.

Frazier, Ricky L., Beaumont, to substation mechanic-2nd class, Electric T&D.

Fredieu, Anthony O., River Bend, to assistant operations supervisor, River Bend Nuclear Group.

G

Galow, Geoffrey G., Beaumont, to coordinator-investor services, Financial Services.

Gremillion, Blaine P., formerly of Lake Charles, to energy management systems engineer, Beaumont Power Supply.

Guy, Terry L., Conroe, to lineman-2nd class, Electric T&D.

H

Hebert, Jean L., Nelson Station, to storeroom supervisor, Plant Production.

Hebert, Paul W., Port Arthur, to lineman-1st class, Electric T&D.

Hemby, Gary D., Beaumont, to garage worker, Electric T&D.

Henry, Gary W., formerly of Louisiana Station, to auxiliary operator, Plant Production, River Bend Station.

Hollingsworth, Dewitt C., Beaumont, to administrator-commercial development, Beaumont System Marketing & Consumer Services.

J

Jean, Gordon R., Nelson Station, to operation supervisor, Plant Production.

Jennings, Lois F., Beaumont, to supervisor-short term finance, Financial Services.

Jimenez, Juan V., Neches Station, to operator's helper (Aux. Opr.), Plant Production.

Jimoh, Jacqueline T., formerly of Nelson Coal, to accountant, Plant Production, Nelson Station.

Johnson, Ardes E., River Bend Station, to head fireman, Plant Production.

Jones, Clayton T., Willow Glen Station, to repairman-1st class, Plant Production.

Jones, Denise E., Beaumont, to staff accountant I, River Bend Nuclear Group.

K

Karlak, Alan W., Beaumont, to energy management systems engineer, Power Supply.

King, Gerald V., River Bend Station, to supervisor-quality systems, River Bend Nuclear Group.

King, Michael P., Beaumont, to production engineer, Beaumont System Production.

L

Lee, Aubrey P. Jr., Willow Glen Station, to electrician-1st class, Plant Production.

M

Mann, Gayle M., Beaumont, to production engineer, System Production.

Marshall, Larry D., Beaumont, to lineman-1st class, Electric T&D.

Meche, Rufus M., formerly of Nelson Station, to staff accountant I, Plant Production, Nelson Coal.

Mencer, Eroll W., Baton Rouge, to lineman-1st class, Electric T&D.

Mitchell, Craig A., Willow Glen Station, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production.

Mouton, Leslie R., Lake Charles, to lineman-1st class, Electric T&D.

N

Nauls, Theodore W., Neches Station, to equipment operator, Plant Production.

Nunez, David W., Beaumont, to senior draftsman, Engineering Design.

O

Olson, Zachary D., Lake Charles, to communications serviceman-1st class, Electric T&D.

Olstowski, Henryk A., Beaumont, to production engineer, Beaumont System Production.

Overbeck, Joseph C., Oak Ridge, to lineman-3rd class, Electric T&D.

P

Payne, Carol Z., Huntsville, to consumer service representative-senior, Division Marketing and Consumer Services.

Picard, James B., Willow Glen Station, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production.

Powell, Sherman R. Jr., formerly of Neches Station, to equipment operator, Plant Production, Nelson Coal.

Pulliam, Arthur C., Port Arthur, to apprentice, Electric T&D.

R

Ratcliff, Janice K., Beaumont, to EDP shift supervisor, Beaumont Computer Applications.

Richardson, Charles S., Jennings, to consumer service representative, Division Marketing and Consumer Services.

Rotolo, Mark E., Willow Glen, to production engineer, System Production.

Rumby, Gary D., Sabine Station, to utility worker II, Plant Production.

S

Scott, Tony Jr., Cleveland, to apprentice, Electric T&D.

Semien, Michael, Beaumont, to lineman-4th class, Electric T&D.

Sherman, Lisa G., Beaumont, to stenographer-senior, River Bend Nuclear Group.

Smith, Mary R., formerly of Beaumont River Bend Nuclear Group, to personnel associate, Beaumont Human Resources.

Solorzano, Efrain, Conroe, to apprentice, Electric T&D.

Stafford, Robert B., River Bend Station, to supervisor-operational quality assurance, River Bend Nuclear Group.

Stotz, Bradley J., Nelson Coal, to production engineer, Plant Production.

Sullivan, Perry M., Willow Glen Station, to electrician-2nd class, Plant Production.

T

Theriot, Sandra M., Beaumont, to customer contact clerk, Division Accounting.

Travis, Shelly A., Nelson Coal, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production.

Trowbridge, Frank R., River Bend Station, to senior start up engineer, River Bend Nuclear Group.

V

Van Hees, Dennis, Navasota, to district service representative, Division Marketing and Consumer Services.

W

Weir, Terry L., formerly of Neches Station, to supervisor-planning & administration, Plant Production, Nelson Station.

White, Darrell W., Neches Station, to turbine operator, Plant Production.

Williams, Anthony J., Baton Rouge, to substation mechanic-2nd class, Electric T&D.

Wilson, Mark W., Neches Station, to staff accountant I, Plant Production.

Wright, Lamech N., Beaumont, to inspector-test lab, Beaumont T&D Operations.



Thomas E. "Ed" Jones, training coordinator, Nelson Station.

Photo by Joseph Hantz



Robert B. "Bob" Stafford, supervisor-operational quality assurance, River Bend.



Photo by Susan Gilley

Joe Budd, real estate representative, Beaumont.

Working together

Teamwork.

Just as in sports, teamwork is the key to success in the business world. At Gulf States, the day-to-day performance of work often

requires cooperation among several persons to get the job done.

This is the first of several



Photo by Nina Wiley

Cynthia Mendez, PBX operator, Conroe.



Photo by Susan Gilley

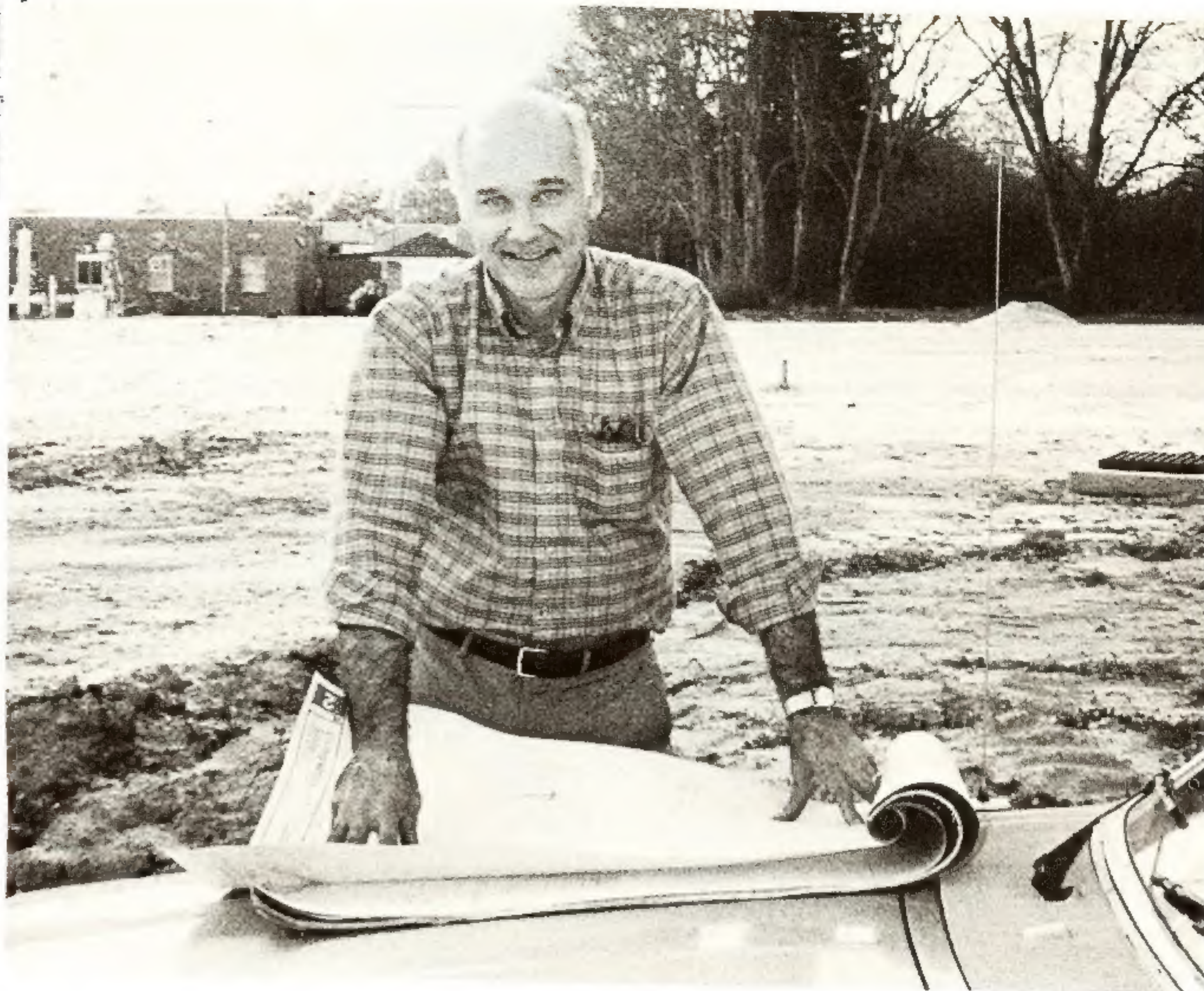


Photo by Michael Bergeron

Jerold Cahal, senior district service representative, Denham Springs.

for Gulf States

by Susan Gilley

articles in *Plain Talks* highlighting Gulf Staters on the job. The diversity of jobs and per-

sonalities may be surprising, but all share one goal — making Gulf States the best it can be.



Photo by Susan Gilley

Opal Dahl, graphics technician, Beaumont.

Photo courtesy of Marketing & Consumer Services



Sue Simon, energy auditor, Port Arthur.

SERVICE AWARDS

**40
years**

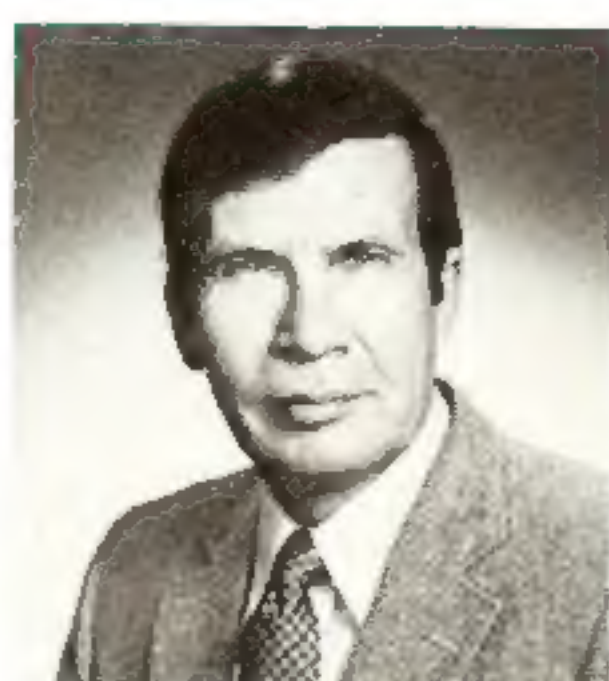


Jeanne B. Johnson
Division Accounting
Lake Charles

**30
years**



Earl J. Broussard
Public Affairs
Baton Rouge



James S. Gremillion
Plant Production
Louisiana Station



Charles L. Harris
Electric T&D
Baton Rouge



Nicholas A. Parrino
Plant Production
Louisiana Station



Bervick A. Stagg
Division Accounting
Beaumont



James T. Stewart
Electric T&D
Baton Rouge



Bobby R. Stout
Electric T&D
Oak Ridge



Hal G. Tierney
Financial Services
Beaumont



Preston E. Whitehead
Electric T&D
Baton Rouge

**20
years**



Sidney Broussard Jr.
Electric T&D
Port Arthur



John D. Jorden
Electric T&D
Beaumont



John H. Joseph
Plant Production
Neches Station



Robert C. LeBert
Electric T&D
Sour Lake



Leslie J. Odom
Electric T&D
Conroe



Danny G. Rutledge
Electric T&D
Somerville



Douglas J. Taylor
Electric T&D
Lafayette



James R. Vice
Plant Production
Willow Glen

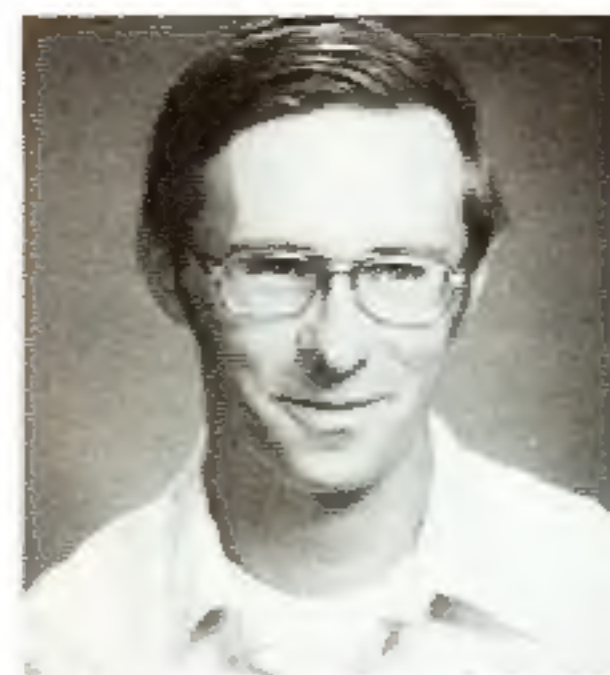
**10
years**



Albert A. Dotch
Electric T&D
Baton Rouge



Gary T. Fontenot
Plant Production
Nelson Station



Johnny L. Langton
Division Accounting
Beaumont



Michael L. Leach
Electric T&D
Beaumont



Semmie Martin
Gas Dept.
Baton Rouge



Opel G. Meyers
Office Services
Beaumont



Gwendolyn Peacock
Power Plant Eng.
& Design
Beaumont



Walter L. Roberts Jr.
Electric T&D
Vidor



Fred R. Rodgers
Plant Production
Neches Station



Earlester C. Sells
Electric T&D
Beaumont



John C. Upton
Division Mktg. &
Cons. Svs.
Baton Rouge

Issue to feature GSU graduates

High school and college graduates whose parents or grandparents are GSU employees or retirees will be featured in a special picture section of a summer issue of *Plain Talks*. The section will also include photographs of GSUers who complete a college degree.

Pictures — preferably black and white, head-to-shoulder shots — should be submitted no later than Friday, June 15, says Betty Gavora, supervisor-employee communications. Color photographs may be submitted if no others are available.

Each picture should be labeled

with the graduate's name, school and relationship to a GSU employee. Pictures will be returned after publication upon the request of the sender.

Pictures of graduates should be sent to *Plain Talks*, Edison Plaza-9th floor, Beaumont.



Kay Graves,
(left) and
Florence Wright
at Afton Villa.



Photo by Susan Gilley

Preserving the past in St. Francisville

by Susan Gilley

The annual Audubon Pilgrimage in St. Francisville offers a peek into the past, as restored plantation homes and elaborate gardens are opened to the public.

Just outside St. Francisville is River Bend Station, where GSU will begin generating electricity with nuclear power in 1985. Yet company officials say the pairing works, partly because many River Bend employees share the community's commitment to preserving the past.

A pledge to preserve the past is almost a requirement for members of the West Feliciana Historical Society, which holds the pilgrimage in honor of John James Audubon. The noted naturalist and artist lived, taught and painted in Oakley Plantation here for a while, painting 82 of his classic *Birds of America* series during his stay.

A craftsman
shows how to
make shingles.



Photo by Susan Gilley

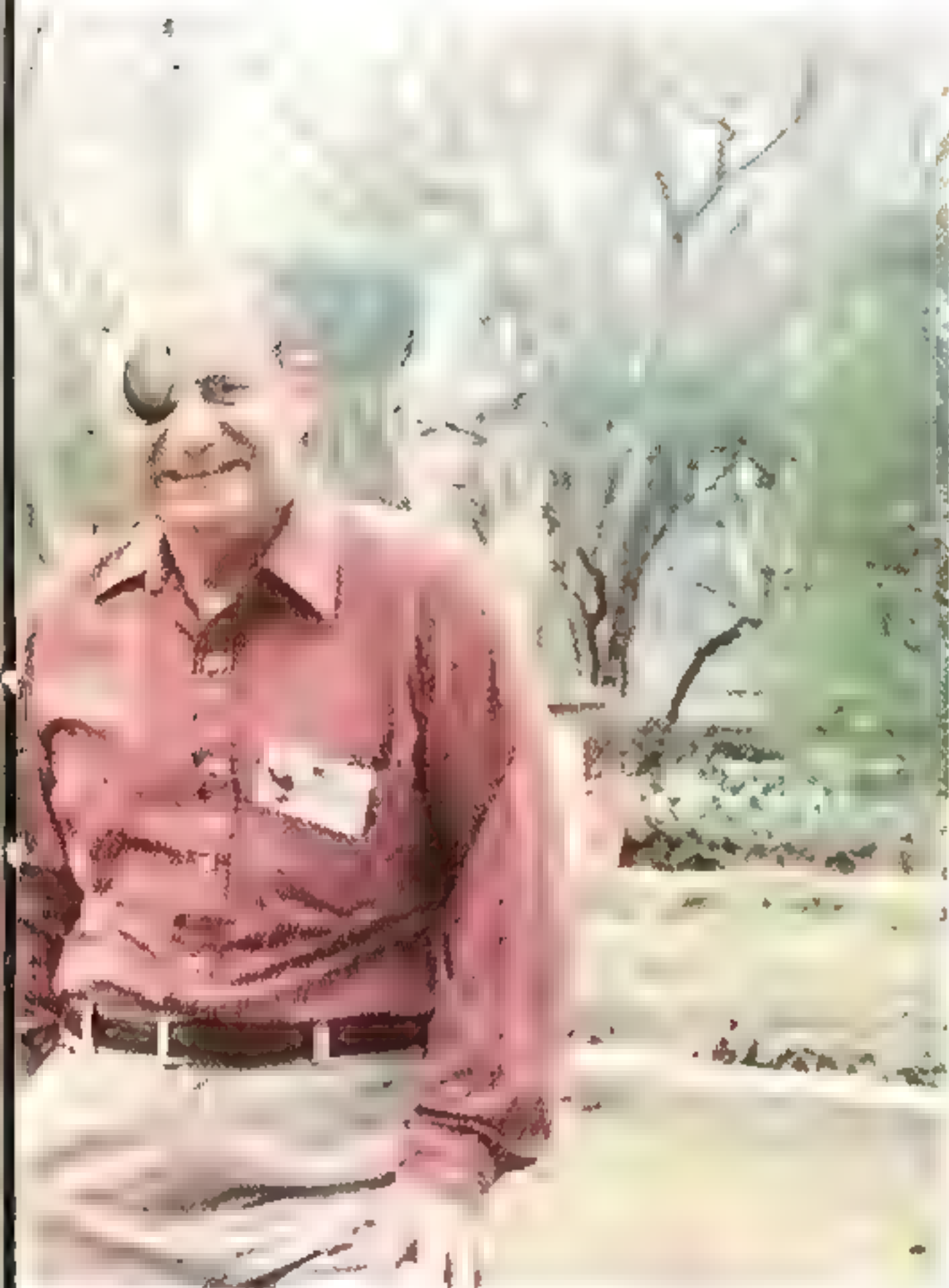


Photo by Andy Dreher

Bill Cahill, senior vice president, helped park cars.



Photo by Susan Gilley

Daffodils surround Edna Cahill (right) and Genevieve Trimble, Afton Villa owner.

The pilgrimage depicts more than the life of luxury enjoyed by plantation families. It also shows how the not-so-wealthy farm families lived and worked through the Rural Homestead Museum.

Among GSU employees and their family members who participated in this year's event were Bill and Edna Cahill. Cahill, senior vice president-River Bend Nuclear Group, helped park cars at one stop along the pilgrimage route. His wife, dressed in a purple antebellum gown, helped guide tourists around the Afton Villa grounds.

Other participants included Andy Dreher, nuclear site communications coordinator; Kevin Dreher, nuclear training representative; and Kay Graves, whose husband, Tommy, is an electrician-1st class/nuclear. Andy Dreher also helped park cars, while his brother Kevin sang in the choir at First United Methodist Church during the candlelight tour. Mrs. Graves was among antebellum-costumed guides at the Afton Villa grounds.

Even though cold weather delayed the flowering of many shrubs, the March 16-18 pilgrimage was a colorful tribute to Audubon.

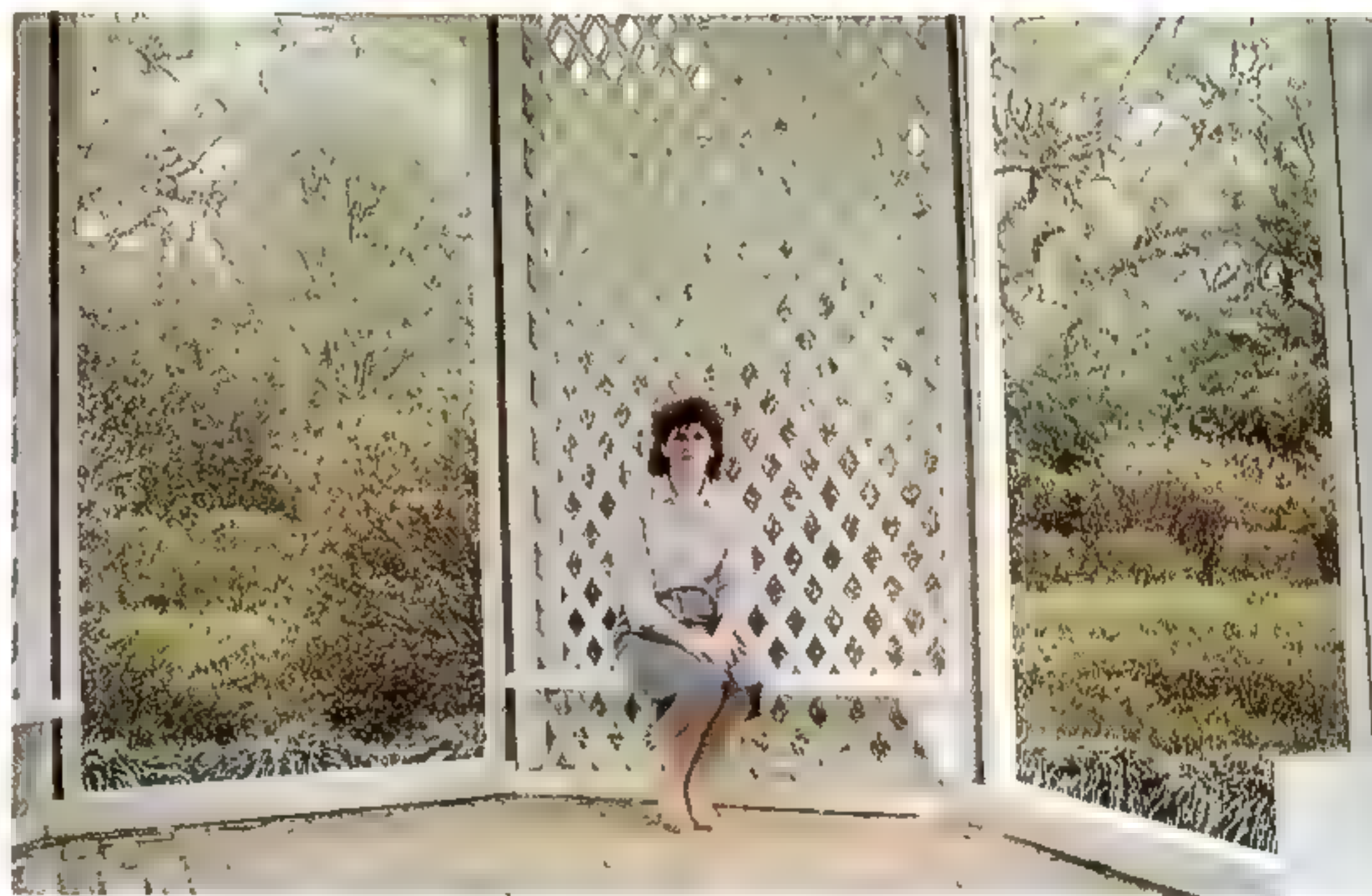


Photo by Susan Gilley

Donna Fancher, River Bend employee, rests in a gazebo in Rosedown Gardens.



Photo by Andy Dreher

Kevin Dreher (upper right) sang during the candlelight tour.

Introducing your correspondents



Dona Austin
Essen Lane,
Baton Rouge



Michael Bergeron
Denham Springs



Susan Choate
Oak Ridge



Betty Dickschat
Navasota



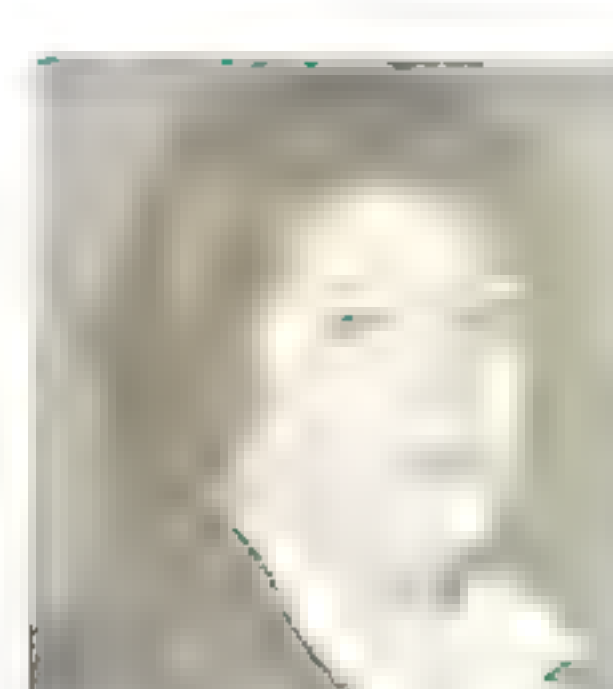
Rhonda Haskins
Vidor



Connie Herford
Nelson Gas &
Oil Station



Les Jones
Beaumont Service
Center



Lynda Kapalski
Dayton



Helen Kennedy
Lafayette



Concetta Rollins
Winnie



Greg Russell
Willow Glen Station



D.W. Rutherford
Lewis Creek



Sheila Soileau
Nelson Coal Station



Delores West
Silsbee



Nina Wiley
Conroe



Angela Wilks
Sulphur



Barbara Broussard
Port Arthur



Ella Brown
Port Allen



Myra Castello
Nelson Coal Station



Bonnie Duval
Sabine Station



Donna Fancher
River Bend Station



Charlotte Gautreau
Gonzales



Lisa Gibson
Louisiana Station



Adelaide Greer
Govt. Street,
Baton Rouge



Clint Lilley
Cleveland



Edith Patterson
Lake Charles
Service Center



Carol Payne
Huntsville



Myra Ponthier
Zachary



Kitty Prouse
Orange



Jill Street
North Blvd.,
Baton Rouge



Laurie Tenner
Neches Station



Monica Thomas
Lake Charles



David Thornhill
Louisiana Station



Jean Tinsley
Madisonville



Dianna Winkelmann
New Caney

Photographs were not available for the following correspondents: Ronnie Bordelon, Choctaw Gas, Baton Rouge; Betty Dowell, Calvert; Andy Dreher, River Bend Station; Casey Richert, Jennings; and Robby Zeringue, Choctaw T&D, Baton Rouge.

Up, up . . . and away

by Susan Gilley

The general rate of inflation dropped below 4 percent in the past couple of years, but at the same time the cost of medical services rose at a rate of about 11 percent.

The *Kiplinger Washington Letter* attributes part of the problem to the fact that most people are covered by some form of insurance and do not take a personal interest in the cost of various medical services. Unfortunately, points out Molly Field, coordinator-employee benefits at GSU, the higher costs are eventually passed on to everybody, often in the form of higher insurance premiums. For instance, GSU's premiums again increased significantly Jan. 1.

At Gulf States alone, the combined cost of Blue Cross/Blue

Shield premiums paid by the company and employees, not including employees' paid deductibles and co-insurance, totaled \$8,650,652 in 1983. In 1981, the total was \$5,081,156.

According to Field, the patients themselves can assume more responsibility for holding down medical costs by questioning medical-care recommendations from their physicians. Field notes, "After all, GSU employees have joined in an all-out effort to hold down the cost of doing business as a utility. The effort has been successful partly because we realize that it is to our advantage as individuals to operate our company efficiently." By taking the same attitude toward medical care, employees may be able to avoid unnecessary

tests or duplications of medical care — thus saving themselves and the company some money. "It's important to remember that the quality of health care need not be lowered," cautions Field. "We should just try to eliminate unnecessary spending — and that may be as simple as requesting outpatient pre-admission testing prior to entering the hospital or questioning physicians or other medical personnel about why they want to order certain prescriptions, tests or lab work," she suggests. "The bottom line," concludes Field, "is that until each individual takes steps to reduce the cost of his or her own medical care, medical costs will continue to escalate faster than other costs of living."





Harts graduates, begins training

Allen J. Harts, son of Roger and Doris Harts of Conroe, is undergoing Officers' Basic Training at Fort Belvoir, Va. Harts graduated from Texas A&M University in December with a civil engineering degree and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army.

Harts' mother is a departmental clerk-Engineering in Conroe.



Carter family grows to nine

The family of David and Marsha Carter of Beaumont grew to nine members Dec. 19 with the birth of their seventh child. Terry Lynn is the name of their newest son, who weighed 9 pounds, 2 ounces and measured 21 inches at birth. The couple

now has three daughters and four sons.

Five employees hunt together

Five Baton Rouge Division employees spent a weekend hunting together at the P.N. Hunt Club in Grand Chenier, La., earlier this year.

They were K.E. McCullough, mechanical maintenance supervisor; Jim Veatch, planning supervisor; Joseph S. Guercio Jr., supervisor-contract crews; James D. Watkins, general superintendent-Willow Glen Station; and Joseph E. Zammitt, general maintenance supervisor.



Hunting partners: Joe Guercio and Joe Zammitt (kneeling, from left), Jim Veatch, Ken McCullough and Doug Watkins, (standing, from left).

Dinner features big-name star

Willie Nelson and a friend showed up at the March 1 management dinner for Fuels and Materials employees.

Actually, the famous country-western musician was mimicked by Colleen Church, secretary-executive, and accompanied by LeNelle Gracey, assistant inventory analyst. Ron Cunningham, purchasing agent, was emcee for the evening.

According to Church, the second annual dinner was held in the Knights of Columbus Hall



Colleen Church (left) and LeNelle Gracey.

near Beaumont, featuring a barbecue/barn dance setting. Most of the decor was loaned by the caterer, a feed store owner and Gracey and included old farm implements, tow sacks and bales of hay.

Son joins Cowart family

Garland and Stephanie Mills Cowart announce the birth of their son, Austin Lloyd, at 8:57 a.m. Dec. 2. The youngster weighed 8 pounds, 12 ounces and measured 20½ inches.

The mother is a clerk in Payment Processing in Beaumont. Other GSU relatives include an uncle, Mic Cowart, claims representative, and a great-grandfather, the late F.A. "Bill" Wilson, a former manager of construction/ Production.





Son joins English family

Clifton Olen English is the latest addition to the C.O. "Butch" English family. The little boy was born Feb. 8, weighing 8 pounds, 3½ ounces.

The proud father is a repairman-2nd class at Sabine Station. Clifton has a sister, 4-year-old Maggie.



Paille places in state pageant

Shuntel D. Paille, 21, won the swimsuit competition and was named second runner-up in the Miss Louisiana-USA 1984 pageant in Monroe.

A recent graduate of Louisiana State University, Shuntel is the daughter of Ronald J. Paille, project maintenance supervisor at Willow Glen Station. In addition to the modeling assignments she has been given for the past

few years, Shuntel also served as a member of LSU's Golden Girls dance line, represented the "Women of LSU" on a poster and was Miss April on an LSU calendar. Other achievements include participating in the International Hawaiian Tropic competition in Daytona Beach, Fla., and representing the city of Baton Rouge at the International English Leather Calendar Girl competition in Las Vegas, Nev. As a result, she received more modeling assignments and was selected as the top English Leather Calendar Girl.



Melanie Wethey wins pageant

Melanie Wethey, granddaughter of Carl E. Courtney of Louisiana Station, was named Little Miss Baton Rouge during a recent pageant.

Melanie, 6, is a student at Silverside Academy. Her mother is Mae Wethey of Baton Rouge. According to her grandfather, who is water treatment foreman, the little girl has been participating in beauty pageants for about two years.

GSUer's son earns pilot designation

Lt.j.g. John Neal, the son of Baton Rouge employee Jim Neal and his wife Scharlie, earned his Naval Aviator Designation as a



jet pilot during ceremonies at the Naval Air Station in Pensacola, Fla., Feb. 3.

Neal's father, a substation foreman, says the younger Neal was named to the Commodore's List and was the top graduate in advanced jet training.

A graduate of both Broadmoor High School in Baton Rouge and Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, Lt. Neal received his officer's commission at the Naval Aviation School Command in Pensacola in 1981.



Fontenot given baby shower

Lafayette employees hosted a baby shower for Ramona R. Fontenot Feb. 17. The energy auditor was expecting a baby sometime in March.

Her gifts included a baby bootie corsage, an infant car seat and crib sheets.



Louisiana World Exposition: GSU goes to the fair

by Susan Gilley

They say the whole world is coming to New Orleans for the 1984 World's Fair, and Gulf States will be part of the crowd.

In a city known for its ability to have fun, the Louisiana World Exposition is expected to offer spectacular opportunities to celebrate for people from many countries from May 12 through Nov. 11.

GSU, along with other utility and community development groups, will participate in staffing an industrial briefing center in the International Business Center of the Central Exhibit Hall. In addition, several Baton Rouge Division employees have donated

their time to raising funds for the Women's Pavilion, says Harriet Babin, supervisor-consumer information services. Several female GSUers participated in a style show that raised almost \$50,000 for the pavilion, to be called "Women in the Mainstream, 1884-1984," which will promote the accomplishments of women.

On an individual basis, Beaumont's Karen McConnell will add to the fair's swirl of colors and events by performing with a clogging group. The Beaumont Silver Star Cloggers are among 10 Texas clogging groups slated to perform. McConnell, corporate librarian, says they'll perform Monday, June 25.

In the International Business Center to be conducted by the Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry, Gulf Staters will take turns working at the briefing center. There, industrialists and consultants from throughout the world can learn about business opportunities in Louisiana, including those in Gulf States' service area.

"We'll have access to a computer with the capability of printing out information about potential industrial sites in 125 Louisiana communities," reports Janice Wynn, area development coordinator. Among other facts, the print-out will include information on schools, housing and other attractions.

Wynn says the fair promises to boost the economy of several towns within the GSU service area. "Indirectly, GSU stands to gain from the fair," she points out. For instance, construction is under way on three motels in Gonzales, which previously had none. Several small towns will provide shuttle service to and from the fairgrounds.

Besides the role GSU will play in the fair, many GSUers and their families will visit the exposition for the pure pleasure of it. Cheryl Beard, secretary-executive in Beaumont General Services, advises those who plan to attend the fair to make their travel arrangements as soon as possible. She adds that Beaumont Travel Consultants, which handles the GSU travel account, will offer some special World's Fair packages. Their GSU extension is 733-3081, and their outside number is (409) 839-3081.

By planning early, GSUers may be able to beat the rush and ensure themselves a place in the crowd, Beard explains.



Karen McConnell (facing left) will perform with the Silver Star Cloggers in the fair's American Showcase June 25.



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Beating the butterflies

by T. J. Reyes

“There was no doubt in my mind that I was going to die.” That’s how Dona Austin recalls her first time to speak before her fellow Toastmasters.

Speaking before a group outranks even the fear of death as the most common fear, according to a recent survey. But many Gulf States employees have found a way to combat the anxiety of public speaking with the help of Toastmasters International.

Employees and their spouses in the Beaumont, Port Arthur and Mid County areas have formed one chapter, while Baton Rouge boasts of another.

Through peer evaluation of impromptu and prepared speeches, members learn to express their ideas and opinions while refining communications skills. The educational program of Toastmasters stresses speaking, listening and leadership.

Hand gestures, body language and eye contact are some of the techniques developed in a “learn by doing” method.

In the days before she joined, Austin says she found it difficult to introduce herself and start a conversation. “Other people may not agree, but I consider myself a shy person,” admits Austin. “The biggest change the club has made is to give me more self-confidence.” Austin is currently president of her chapter.

Austin finds the club offers an opportunity to meet people she ordinarily wouldn’t see in her work. At district meetings and speech contests, she meets GSU employees from other locations. “Because of this, I think I have a better overall view of Gulf States,” claims the senior stenographer, who works at Baton Rouge’s Essen Lane office.

Don Ramsey, president of the Beaumont-Port Arthur area group, echoes Austin’s praise



Doris Bodden (left) and Dona Austin, both senior stenographers in Baton Rouge, display their Toastmaster chapter's banner.

for the organization. “Just recently my wife commented on my improved diction,” he says, adding that he sees some improvement, too.

Ramsey, a storeroom supervisor in Port Arthur, points out that many newcomers to Toastmasters are told that the club may not eliminate “butterflies in the stomach” but it will help get them flying in the same direction.

The first speech a new member gives is called an icebreaker, sort of a self-introduction to fellow members. “Most people find it easy to talk about themselves,” Ramsey explains. “That’s why this is a good topic for your first time in front of the group.”

It was those wild-flying butterflies that kept Louis Calfee from feeling at ease when leading in prayer at his church. Calfee, who is a coordinator of

telecommunications engineering for System Relay Engineering in Beaumont, sees the club as beneficial to all GSU employees, even those whose work may not require speaking before a group.

“Anyone who communicates — and we all do everyday — will benefit from Toastmasters,” says Calfee. “The skills you learn can help prepare you for future advancement in your job.”

Calfee, who has been a member of Toastmasters for one and a half years now, credits it with making him a better listener. “I find myself really listening to others. Some people can get up to speak and the words just flow,” Calfee states. “I’m not nearly as polished as that, but I’ve learned I can lead a prayer at church now and address a group with satisfactory results. That’s how Toastmasters has helped me.”

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